

THE BASIC NEUROSIS—ORAL REGRESSION AND PSYCHIC MASOCHISM. By Edmund Bergler, M.D., Grune and Stratton, Inc., N. Y., 1949. \$5.00.

In the preface, the author asks the question, "Why write the book in the first place?" and answers it by stating, "The answer is simple: I am tired of constantly explaining my ideas on 'orality' and psychic masochism, and hope to save myself time and fruitless effort in answering questions, by being able to refer to the book." His ideas, he states, have already been expressed in "approximately 130 papers and six books," but since he has been blamed for not expressing precisely what he means, he has written this book for those people who have avoided reading his papers, adding, however, that when he has been accused of not expressing himself precisely, it is, in general, "a polite word for reader's shifting the blame for not understanding the material presented—because of his own resistances—onto the innocent author." This reviewer must confess that he is one of those who, resistance or not, has had difficulty in comprehending or accepting some of the author's dogmatic utterances and interpretations.

The first chapter is concerned with the symptoms and signs of "oral regression." The reader who is unfamiliar with psychoanalytic jargon will have difficulty in following the author's "flights into fantasy." Phrases like Oedipus complex, libido, aggression, anal and phallic phases, "autarchic fantasy," passivity, narcissism, castration fear, etc., abound throughout the volume. Analytically, the oral phase refers to that period of an infant's development when his contact with the external world is mainly by way of his mouth: Eating, breathing, vomiting, etc. By psychic masochism is meant the technique developed by people who are "unconsciously lovers of humiliation, defeat, and refusal." For the author there is but one basic neurosis which is oral in genesis, and the other nosologic groups (obsessive compulsive neurosis and hysteria) based on "anal and phallic regression" are but "rescue stations from the basic oral regression." Further elaboration of this concept of neurosis is made on a "nine point basis"; and the analytic concept of the development of conscience (superego) is described in some detail. One chapter describes 27 clinical pictures of oral regression, including among them the oral character neurosis (the "injustice-collectors" who constantly provoke a "kick in the jaw"), those men with premature ejaculation or psychogenic oral aspermia; woman with frigidity, promiscuity; erythrophobia (pathologic blushing), writer's block, pseudo-mental deficiency, retirement neurosis, homosexuality, alcohol addiction, gambling, kleptomania, overeating, oversmoking, and criminality. The author optimistically closes with the statement, "Working with my definition and clinic of orality I can state that the prognosis in orally regressed cases is excellent, provided they are 'exposed' to the correctly applied 'mechanism of orality.'" One certainly cannot criticize the author for any lack of self-confidence! Despite this, there is much in this volume which is stimulating and provocative to the physician who also has some knowledge of psychodynamic concepts.

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BENTLEY'S TEXT-BOOK OF PHARMACEUTICS. Revised by Harold Davis, B.Sc., Ph.D. (Lond.), F.R.I.C., Pereira Medallist, Sometime Chief Pharmacist, University College Hospital, London, with the collaboration of M. W. Partridge, B. Pharm., B.Sc., Ph.D. (Lond.), Ph.C., Lecturer in Chemistry, University of Nottingham, and A. I. Robinson, Ph.C., Late Pharmacist in Charge, Manufacturing Laboratory, Messrs. Stafford Allen and Sons, Ltd., London. Fifth Edition. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1949. \$7.50.

This is the fifth edition of a book on pharmacy with a historical introduction on the development of this field and its standards of procedures in Great Britain followed by a description of methods of preparing, manufacturing, preserving, dispensing and packaging of pharmaceutical prepa-

rations which are listed according to Latin names followed by English. The book deals largely with methods, equipment, devices, and standards, 703 pages being devoted to these and 381 pages to medicinal products. Bioassays are given about two pages, and a listing of therapeutic doses 12 pages. The medicinal agents are chiefly from the British Pharmacopoeia, but there are also selections from the British Pharmacopoeial Codex and the United States Pharmacopoeia, including a number of unofficial, often unnecessarily complex, and, according to American standards, unacceptable mixtures. There are descriptions of and standards for such products as cotton, dressings, sutures, ligatures, silk, wool, etc. The author has included accounts of his experiences with drugs as a hospital pharmacist.

The titles for products are sometimes quite different from those used in this country or in scientific literature. For example leptazol is metrazol, but leptazol is not to be found in the index (except under injections) while metrazol is. The same holds for a number of other drugs. Trade names are more prevalent than in similar American books.

There is nothing of interest in this book to practicing physicians, medical specialists and pharmacologists. It is chiefly of interest to pharmacists, especially to those of Britain and its commonwealth nations. It has nothing more or better to offer than the U.S.P. and several publications of the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry of the A.M.A., and is not necessary as a reference work in medical libraries.

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SEXUAL DISORDERS IN THE MALE. By Kenneth Walker, F.R.C.S., Emeritus Surgeon to the Genito-Urinary Department, Royal Hospital; and Eric B. Strauss, D.M., F.R.C.P., Physician for Psychological Medicine, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Third revised edition. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1948. \$3.50.

This book on the practical aspects of diagnosis and treatment of male sexual disorders has reached a third edition primarily because of its practical and essentially non-technical approach to a commonly met and perplexing problem in general and urological practice. Over one-half of the book is devoted to impotence, which agrees well with the relative frequency of this complaint in office practice. Beginning with an adequate and clear exposition of sexual physiology, the author deals in turn with many aspects of impotence, then discusses in somewhat less detail priapism, sexual deviations, masturbation, and lastly, sexual difficulties in marriage.

It is easy to criticize a work such as this yet find it difficult to improve upon it in order to increase its basic scientific worth without decreasing its readability and its practical value. The fundamental difficulty in writing a book on sexual disorders, just as in handling patients with their complaints, is that it is nearly impossible for the author and for the busy practitioner first to master the fundamentals of psychopathology, since sexual disorders hark back to the very beginnings of personality development, and second to spend the time necessary to search out these basic and original deviations from the complex pattern of the early personality development. As a consequence, both author and reader end with an essentially superficial approach to the problem. The reader is prepared at best by this book to remove, perhaps temporarily, the more superficial blocks to normal sexual activity and, perhaps more important, to avoid organotherapy and instrumentation except in the quite secondary role which it should play. In line with this practical approach, it might be added that there could be more discussion of the sexual difficulties in marriage since these so often are the precipitating factor and, more important, are most amenable to the type of therapy which can be given by the practitioner. The stress on the female role in the control of impotence is well advised.

The book contains 10 illustrations which add little to the value of the text.